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5. SOME FOOD PLANTS OF CHITAL (*AXIS AXIS*) IN RAJAJI NATIONAL PARK, INDIA.

While studying chital habitat use in and around Dholkhand, Rajaji National Park, India, during November 1992 - May 1993, we observed some plant items fed upon by chital. Observations were either direct (i.e. seen in the chital's mouth) or indirect (i.e. fresh signs where the chital had just fed). Binoculars (8 x 30) were used. We report our findings, which, incidentally, seem to be the northwestern-most record on chital food preferences in India.

The species and plant parts eaten are listed in Table 1. We did not see, but strongly believe from our observations on chital behaviour, that leaves of *Acacia catechu*, *Terminalia bellirica*, *Adina cordifolia*, *Carissa opaca*, and fruits of *C. opaca* and *Bauhinia racemosa* were also eaten.

Of the 35 species we have listed, 9 are being reported for the first time (Table 1), while 26 have already been documented in one or more of seven earlier reports in India. Our observations also suggest that food preferences of chital differed with seasons, availability and palatability.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are very grateful to the Uttar Pradesh Forest Department, the Director and the staff of

TABLE 1
SOME FOOD PLANTS OF CHITAL IN THE PARK

Plant species	Part eaten	Remark
<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	stm + lf	stm & lf together
<i>Anogeissus latifolia</i>	lf	
* <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i>	stm + lf (nf)	Available and eaten only in March-April
* <i>Arenaria serpyllifolia</i>	stm + lf (nf)	Available and eaten only in March-April
<i>Bridelia retusa</i>	lf	
<i>Blumea</i> sp.	stm + lf	
* <i>Carex</i> sp.	lf	
<i>Chloris dolichostachya</i>	nf	
<i>Chrysopogon fulvus</i>	nf	
<i>Cordia obliqua</i>	lf	
<i>Crotalaria</i> sp.	stm + lf	
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	stm + lf	
<i>Cyperus kyllingia</i>	stm + lf (nf)	
<i>Dendrophthoe falcata</i>	lf	
<i>Desmostachya bipinnata</i>	lf (nf)	
* <i>Dicliptera roxburghiana</i>	stm + lf	
* <i>Eulaliopsis binata</i>	nf	Only nf from cut stock eaten
* <i>Gnaphalium leuteo-album</i>	stm + lf (nf)	Available and eaten only in March-April
<i>Helicteres isora</i>	lf (nf)	
<i>Heteropogon contortus</i>	lf (nf)	
<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	stm + lf	
<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>	nf	
<i>Justicia simplex</i>	stm + lf	
<i>Lantana camara</i>	lf	

TABLE I (contd.)
SOME FOOD PLANTS OF CHITAL IN THE PARK

Plant Species	Part eaten	Remark
<i>Mallotus philippinensis</i>	lf	
* <i>Neyraudia arundinacea</i>	stm + lf	
* <i>Shorea robusta</i>	p + inf	Available and eaten only in April-May
<i>Sporobolus diander</i>	nf	
* <i>Stellaria media</i>	stm + lf (nf)	Available and eaten only in March-April
<i>Terminalia tomentosa</i>	lf	
<i>Urena lobata</i>	stm + lf	
<i>Vetiveria zizanioides</i>	nf	nf from burnt stock
<i>Zizyphus xylopyra</i>	lf, ft	
<i>Z. mauritiana</i>	ft	Seen from carcass
Malvaceae member	stm + lf	Probably <i>Malvastrum coromandelianum</i>

(stm = stem, lf = leaf, nf = new flush, ft = fruit, p = petals, inf = inflorescence); * First record, to our knowledge.

Rajaji National Park who kindly facilitated our study; WCU (IUCN) funded it through Wildlife Institute of India.

July 27, 1999

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6. BIRDS FORAGING ON TREE TRUNKS

On several occasions, while studying woodpeckers at the Peechi - Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary (Thrissur dist., Kerala), I came across birds other than woodpeckers foraging on tree trunks either in association with woodpeckers

or all by themselves. I report here some of these observations. It may be stated that there was no systematic effort to gather this data as it was not the focus of my studies.

Eleven species of birds from eight families

TABLE I
BIRDS SEEN FORAGING ON TREE TRUNKS

Species	# Obs.	Association with woodpeckers	Food consumed
Meropidae			
Bluebearded Bee-eater* (<i>Nyctornis athertoni</i>)	1	-	I
Capitonidae			
Small Green Barbet (<i>Megalaima viridis</i>)	2	-	T; I
Dicruridae			
Grey Drongo (<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>)	1	-	I
Racket-tailed Drongo (<i>D. paradiseus</i>)	5	2	I
Sturnidae			
Whiteheaded Myna (<i>Sturnus malabaricus</i>)	4	1	I; T
Corvidae			
Treepie (<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>)	2	2	I

TABLE I (contd.)
BIRDS SEEN FORAGING ON TREE TRUNKS

Species	# Obs.	Association with woodpeckers	Food consumed
Campephagidae			
Large Wood-Shrike (<i>Tephrodornis virgatus</i>)	4	-	I, S, T
Pycnonotidae			
Redwhiskered Bulbul* (<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>)	2	2	T
Redvented Bulbul* (<i>P. cafer</i>)	7	5	T, I
Muscicapidae			
Jungle Babbler* (<i>Turdoides striatus</i>)	1	1	T
Paradise Flycatcher* (<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>)	1	-	I

(Note: T -Termites; I-Insects; S-Spiders)